

Message Text

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BRUSSELS, CAIRO, CANBERRA, COPENHAGEN, DAMASCUS, DUBLIN, THE HAGUE,
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GENEVA 09921

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ILO, PLAB

SUBJECT: ILO CONFERENCE: WRAP-UP AND EVALUATION

REF: GENEVA 09855

SUMMARY: THE CONFERENCE ADOPTED TWO CONVENTIONS - ON LABOR
ADMINISTRATION AND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IN THE PUBLIC
SECTOR. THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE
APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS RECON-
FIRMED THE UNIFORM APPLICATION OF STANDARDS IRRESPECTIVE
OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
EMPHASIZED THIS CONCEPT BEFORE THE PLENARY. THE CON-
FERENCE AGREED TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE WORKING PARTY
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ON STRUCTURE FOR ONE MORE YEAR. TRIPARTITISM AND DUE
PROCESS WERE STRESSED, THE LATTER PARTICULARLY BY THE
REJECTION OF THE LIBYAN-SYRIAN RESOLUTION AGAINST ISRAEL.
THAT RESOLUTION CAUSED THE G-77 TO SPLIT AND THE IMEC
TO SOLIDIFY. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL PROPOSED THE STRENG-
THENING OF THE INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES TO STUDY QUICKER
SECTORAL ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE AS ONE MEANS OF COMBATING
GROWING PROTECTIONISM IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.
IMEC COUNTRIES ARE PLEASED WITH THE CONFERENCE AND
EXPECT THAT WE WILL BE ALSO. END SUMMARY

1. IN EARLIER MESSAGES THE MISSION REPORTED ON SIGNIFICANT
DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCURRED IN THE ILO CONFERENCE.
THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES THE RESULTS AND EVALUATES THE
ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CONFERENCE.

2. AS HAS BEEN NORMALLY THE CASE, THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES
OF THE CONFERENCE COMPLETED THEIR WORK ON SCHEDULE AND
THEIR REPORTS WERE APPROVED BY THE CONFERENCE WITH NO
OPPOSITION. THE CONFERENCE ADOPTED TWO CONVENTIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS: ONE ON LABOR ADMINISTRATION, DESIGNED
TO ENCOURAGE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ROLE OF ALL PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR LABOR ADMINISTRATION,
PARTICULARLY AS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND CON-
DITIONS OF WORK. THE CONVENTION ENCOURAGES CONSULTATION
WITH AND PARTICIPATION OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS AND

THEIR ORGANIZATIONS; THE OTHER, CONCERNING PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE AND PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE. THE CONVENTION ENCOURAGES SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR THROUGH NEGOTIATION OR THROUGH MEDIATION, CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION.

3. THE CONFERENCE ADOPTED THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CACR) WITHOUT OBJECTION. THE REPORT WAS A GOOD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ONE, UNDERSCORING THE UNIVERSAL AND UNIFORM APPLICATION OF STANDARDS, AND RETAINING INTACT THE SPECIAL LIST. ADDITIONALLY, ALTHOUGH THE COMMITTEE DID NOT USE CRITERION 7 OF THE SPECIAL LIST THIS YEAR, UNITED KINGDOM WORKER DELEGATE LOYD EMPHASIZED DURING THE PLENARY THAT "THE DECISION NOT TO USE CRITERION NO. 7 (THIS YEAR) SHOULD NOT CREATE THE FALSE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS WITHERING AWAY. WE WANT TO KEEP THIS TOOL ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE SPECIAL LIST". THE CONFERENCE AGREED WITH THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO SET UP A WORKING PARTY NEXT YEAR TO REVIEW THE ROLE OF THE SPECIAL LIST AND THE SPECIAL PARAGRAPHS. SPEAKING BEFORE THE PLENARY JUNE 28, DIRECTOR GENERAL BLANCHARD STRESSED THAT IN EXAMINING HOW THE CACR DOES ITS WORK "THE POINT REALLY AT ISSUE IS THE NECESSITY OF ENSURING THAT THE IMPARTIAL EXAMINATION BY THE EXPERTS, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE DIALOGUE IN THE COMPETENT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, ON THE OTHER, TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE DIVERSITY OF LOCAL SITUATIONS. BUT... THAT CANNOT CALL INTO QUESTION EITHER THE UNIVERSAL SCOPE OF OUR STANDARDS OR THE UNIFORMITY OF THE CRITERIA BY WHICH THEIR APPLICATION MUST BE EVALUATED. IN MY VIEW, THEREFORE, THE TOOL MUST BE PERFECTED, NOT DISCARDED, OR REPLACED".

4. DURING AN EARLY SESSION, THE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE DECIDED TO ASK THE CONFERENCE TO EXTEND FOR ONE YEAR THE LIFE OF THE WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE. ONCE THAT CENTRAL ISSUE WAS DECIDED, THE REST OF THE STRUCTURE DEBATE WAS ROUTINE--RATHER ONE OF DELEGATES GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF EXPRESSING WELL-KNOWN VIEWS RATHER THAN FORGING NEW GROUND. THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WAS APPROVED BY THE CONFERENCE WITHOUT OBJECTION. IT WAS THE LAST ITEM ON THE CONFERENCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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AGENDA. WORKER AND EMPLOYER DELEGATES BOTH IN COMMITTEE

AND PLENARY SESSIONS MADE IT CLEAR THAT WHATEVER NEW STRUCTURE DEVELOPED FOR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNING BODY, IT WOULD NOT IMPACT ON EITHER OF THE TWO NON-GOVERNMENT GROUPS. THE WORKERS' VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON STRUCTURE STATED THAT THE COMPOSITION OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS WAS A MATTER FOR THEM TO RESOLVE. THUS, THE AUTONOMY OF THE GROUPS AND THE TRIPARTITE SYSTEM WAS REINFORCED. THE OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN STRUCTURE OF IMPORTANCE WAS THE REEMPHASIS BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED THAT STRUCTURE, THE QUORUM MATTER, THE VETO ISSUE AND THE INTRODUCTION OF UNRELATED RESOLUTIONS, REPRESENTED A PACKAGE. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT NO ONE ISSUE COULD BE RESOLVED INDEPENDENTLY OF THE OTHERS.

5. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE APPLICATIONS OF STANDARDS AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEES AND SUBSEQUENTLY IN THE PLENARY DISCUSSIONS REINFORCED THE IMPORTANT CONCEPT OF TRIPARTISM IN THE ILO. SO TOO DID THE ELECTIONS TO THE GOVERNING BODY, WHERE THE EMPLOYER AND WORKER GROUPS GAVE SHORT SHRIFT TO THE COMMUNIST CANDIDATES (GENEVA 09034) AND ELECTED AN ISRAELI TO THE GOVERNING BODY. THE VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION AGAINST ISRAEL (REFTEL) WAS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HOW THE TRIPARTITE SYSTEM IS ALIVE AND WELL.

6. THE RESULT OF THE VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION WAS A SURPRISE TO ALL PARTIES. ILO OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED GREAT PLEASURE THAT THE ILO WAS THE FIRST UN BODY TO REJECT AN ARAB RESOLUTION AGAINST ISRAEL. THE VOTE UNDERSCORED THE UNIQUENESS OF THE ILO TRIPARTITE SYSTEM. THE RESULT WAS A BOOST FOR DUE PROCESS. OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, WE BELIEVE, IS THE CRACK THAT DEVELOPED IN THE G-77 UNITY. IT IS CLEAR THAT AT LEAST IN THE ILO THE G-77 HAS SOME FENCE-MENDING TO DO. THE RADICALS HAVE BEEN PUT ON NOTICE THAT THEY MAY NO LONGER BE ABLE
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TO ORCHESTRATE "G-77 POSITIONS". IMEC COUNTRIES AND WORKER AND EMPLOYER DELEGATES JUSTIFIABLY ARE PLEASED WITH THE STRATEGY THEY DEVELOPED FOR CONFRONTING THE SYRIAN-LIBYAN RESOLUTION. IMEC UNITY, WHICH AT TIMES DURING THE MEETINGS OF THE WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE EARLIER THIS YEAR APPEARED TO BE FLOUNDERING, HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED. SETTING A CONCILIATORY TONE, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REMINDING THE SPONSORS OF THE RESOLUTION THAT IT WAS UNTIMELY AND UNNECESSARY, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, IN HIS CLOSING REMARKS TO THE CONFERENCE REMINDED THE DELEGATES THAT UNDER TERMS OF THE 1974 RESOLUTION, HE HAS TO REPORT TO THE CONFERENCE IN 1979 ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. HE STATED, "I UNDERTAKE AN ENGAGEMENT TO SET TO WORK THE MEANS AT THE OFFICE'S

DISPOSAL, TO IMPROVE IN A CONCRETE WAY...THE FUTURE
OF THE ARAB WORKERS IN THESE TERRITORIES. I UNDERTOOK
THE SAME ENGAGEMENT HERE LAST YEAR...I CARRIED IT OUT.
I RENEW IT TODAY."

7. DELEGATES SPEAKING IN PLENARY SESSIONS ON THE DIRECTOR-
GENERAL'S REPORT HARDLY REFERRED TO HIS PROPOSAL THAT
THE CONFERENCE CONSIDER SIMPLY TAKING NOTE OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL DID NOT MENTION
IT IN HIS ADDRESSES. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THIS PROPOSAL
HAS BEEN GIVEN A QUIET BURIAL. MANY DELEGATES LAMENTED
THE LACK OF PROGRESS OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE 1976 WORLD
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL PLEDGED AN
ACCELERATED EFFORT BY THE ILO, AND TOOK NOTE OF A
PROPOSAL BY THE LABOR MINISTER OF BANGLADESH THAT A
WORLD EMPLOYMENT FUND BE ESTABLISHED (NO DETAILS WERE
PROVIDED). THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ALSO OBSERVED A GROWING
TREND OF PROTECTIONISM AMONG INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES
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AND PROPOSED THAT THE TRIPARTITE INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES
BE STRENGTHENED. HE SUGGESTED THAT SMALL TRIPARTITE
MEETINGS BE CONVENED BETWEEN THE NORMAL SESSIONS TO
CONSIDER SECTORAL ADJUSTMENT POLICIES WHEN NEEDED.

8. MANY OF OUR IMEC COLLEAGUES HAVE TOLD THE MISSION
THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS THE MOST SATISFYING, FROM A
WESTERN POINT OF VIEW, IN MANY YEARS. ALTHOUGH THE
MISSION HAS REFRAINED FROM EXPRESSING OPINIONS ON THE
IMPACT THE CONFERENCE RESULTS WILL HAVE ON THE FUTURE
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE ILO, IT IS CLEAR
THAT OUR IMEC FRIENDS EXPECT THE RESULTS WILL BE
FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY US. VANDEN HEUVEL UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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